

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-19, 21-27, 37-42, 49-57, and 64-75, which are pending, are amended in this paper. Claims 2, 11, 20 28-36, 43-48, 58-63 and 76-84 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification, specifically at pages 46-53 and 61 and figures 16-19.

No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 10, 12-14, 16, 37-40, 49-54, 64, and 66-71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,469,216 to Takahashi et al. (hereinafter, merely "Takahashi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,436,659 to Vincent et al. (hereinafter, merely "Vincent") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,499,494 to Dischert (hereinafter, merely "Dischert") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,222,985 to Miyake (hereinafter, merely "Miyake") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,400,890 to Nagasaka et al. (hereinafter, merely "Nagasaka").

Claims 6, 8, 9, 15, 17-27, 41-42, 55-57 and 72, 74 and 75 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Takahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,748,235 to Kondo (hereinafter, merely, “Kondo”).

Claims 19-23, 25, 41-42, 55-57, 72, and 74-75 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Takahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, and further in view of an Official Notice.

III. RESPONSE TO REJECTION

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

“extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal in accordance with the color component of each pixel of interest and in accordance with the color component of the plurality of pixels to be extracted.” (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that Tanahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, Kondo, and Official Notice, taken either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the above-identified features of claim 1. Specifically, nothing is found in the references which the Office Action relied on that teaches or suggests “extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal in accordance with the color component of each pixel of interest and in accordance with the color component of the plurality of pixels to be extracted”, as recited in claim 1.

Indeed as claimed in claim 1, an extraction means extracts pixels in accordance with the color component of each pixel of interest and in accordance with the color component of the plurality of pixels to be extracted. Applicants submit that the art used as a basis of rejection fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Claims 10 and 19 are similar, or somewhat similar, in scope with claim 1 and are therefore patentable for similar, or somewhat similar, reasons.

Claim 37 recites, *inter alia*:

“output image-signal generating means for generating an output image signal having more sample values than the prescribed number, for the various colors, by processing each pixel of the input image signal in accordance with the class determined by the class-determining means and in accordance with a relative position of added samples to a corresponding sample in the input image signal.” (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that Tanahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, Kondo, and Official Notice, taken either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the above-identified features of claim 37. Specifically, nothing is found in the references which the Office Action relied on that teaches or suggests “output image-signal generating means for generating an output image signal having more sample values than the prescribed number, for the various colors, by processing each pixel of the input image signal in accordance with the class determined by the class-determining means and in accordance with a relative position of added samples to a corresponding sample in the input image signal”, as recited in claim 37.

Indeed as claimed in claim 37, output image-signal generating means generates an output image signal in accordance with the class determined by the class-determining means and in accordance with a relative position of added samples to a corresponding sample in the input image signal. Applicants submit that the art used as a basis of rejection fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Claims 39 and 41 are similar, or somewhat similar, in scope with claim 37 and are therefore patentable for similar, or somewhat similar, reasons.

Claim 49 recites, *inter alia*:

“extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal, each pixel having a color component of the highest density of all color components.” (emphasis added)

The Office Action (see page 9) relies on class code circuit 3 of Figure 1, column 3, line 44 to column 4, line 10 of Takahashi to reject the above identified features of claim 49. The cited portion of Takahashi discusses the generation of a class code by class coded circuit based on the outer block and inner block. Nothing in Takahashi teaches or discloses that these blocks are generated based on a color component of the highest density of all color components as recited in claim 49.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that since each pixel of the image discussed in Takahashi includes the same color components, the density of each color component is equal and has no highest density of all color components.

Applicants respectfully submit that Tanahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, Kondo, and Official Notice, taken either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the above-identified features of claim 49. Specifically, nothing is found in the references which the Office Action relied on that teaches or suggests “extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal, each pixel having a color component of the highest density of all color components”, as recited in claim 49.

Claims 52 and 55 are similar, or somewhat similar, in scope with claim 49 and are therefore patentable for similar, or somewhat similar, reasons.

Claim 64 recites, *inter alia*:

“extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels for each color component, from pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal;

class-determining means including a characteristic-data generating section for generating characteristic data about the pixels of each color component.” (emphasis added)

In general, claim 64 relates to extraction means and class-determining means for each color component. For example, when an input signal includes red, green, and blue, the extract means and class-determining means execute corresponding processing on red, green, and blue color respectively.

The Office Action (see page 12) relies on Takahashi to reject the above identified features of claim 64. Applicants respectfully submit that Takahashi discusses processing on each block but fails to disclose that such processing is executed on each color of the input signal.

Applicants respectfully submit that Tanahashi, Vincent, Dischert, Miyake, Nagasaka, Kondo, and Official Notice, taken either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the above-identified features of claim 64. Specifically, nothing is found in the references which the Office Action relied on that teaches or suggests **“extraction means for extracting a plurality of pixels for each color component, from pixels located near each pixel of interest of the white-balanced image signal”** and **“class-determining means including a characteristic-data generating section for generating characteristic data about the pixels of each color component”**, as recited in claim 64.

Claims 68 and 72 are similar, or somewhat similar, in scope with claim 64 and are therefore patentable for similar, or somewhat similar, reasons.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.


CONCLUSION

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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